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TAGS: [AORC](#) [UNGA](#)

SUBJECT: UN REFORM: BATTLE WITH G-77 LOOMING OVER CONTROL
OF SYG REPORT ON MANAGEMENT REFORM

REF: A. USUN 461

[1B.](#) USUN 442

[11.](#) SUMMARY: Ambassador Wolff met March 16 with GA President's Chef de Cabinet Lars Wiede to discuss next steps in Member States' consideration of the Secretary-General's report on management reform introduced March 7 entitled, "Investing in the UN: For a Stronger Organization Worldwide" (reftels). Wolff argued that the GA Plenary should retain full control over the process, given the letter and intent of world leaders regarding the handling of the report as expressed in the Outcome Document (paragraph 163 a), the consequent GA General Committee decision to allocate consideration of the report to the Plenary, and the use of similar procedures in November/December 2005 when the Plenary took decisions to establish an ethics office; authorize an external evaluation of UN auditing and oversight; and, create an independent audit advisory committee. Wiede agreed that while reason and logic supported the U.S. arguments, G-77 members were determined to refer the SYG's Report to the Fifth Committee - a position that Wiede noted they had articulated even before the report's March 7 release. Wiede also agreed with Wolff's insistence that any decision by the Plenary to allocate consideration of the Report or parts thereof to the Fifth Committee would have to be strictly time-bound, with a clear deadline for Fifth Committee response required. Wiede said GA President Eliasson was planning to convene a plenary session the week of March 20 to resolve the procedural dispute over the SYG's Report, but might delay such a discussion until ACABQ released its analysis, which might help to identify those issues that merited Fifth Committee consideration. END SUMMARY.

PROCEDURAL DEBATE
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[12.](#) Wiede said he welcomed U.S. views on how best to handle Member State consideration of the SYG's management report in light of the G-77's continued insistence that the entire report be allocated to the Fifth Committee for analysis and review, a position key G-77 members publicly signaled even before the report's March 7 release. Wiede's recent private consultations with a number of G-77 members revealed little change in their tough stance on this issue. Wolff responded that reason and logic clearly supported allocation of the report to the Plenary. The intent of world leaders, as specifically reflected in the actual language of paragraph 163 (a) of the Outcome Document, was that the SYG's report on budgetary, financial and human resource policies be submitted directly to the General Assembly Plenary for its consideration and decision. Reflecting this, the GA's General Committee in September 2005 allocated follow-up on the Outcome Document during the 60th UNGA to the Plenary, not the Fifth Committee, under agenda items 46 and 120, and the GA approved of this allocation. In this manner, the Plenary

was given the lead on the SYG's management report. In addition, the recent precedent of the GA's handling of reform initiatives contained in A/60/568 (i.e., establishment of a UN ethics office, authorization for an external evaluation of UN auditing and oversight, creation of an independent audit advisory committee) placed overall control and decision-making in the Plenary, taking into account views sought from ACABQ and the Fifth Committee.

¶3. Wiede agreed that logic and reason supported the U.S. approach, but noted G-77 members were insisting that past precedents demanded that a SYG report on administrative and budgetary matters be sent directly to the Fifth Committee. In response to a Wolff query, Wiede confirmed that ACABQ currently was evaluating the SYG's report without prejudice to the future venue in which Member State discussions would take place. Wolff suggested the ACABQ report could prove helpful if it identified those initiatives on which the SYG could take immediate action, as well as those issues, such as the future role and working methods of the Fifth Committee, for example, that were more appropriately left for Plenary consideration of governance matters. An ACABQ analysis of this nature could help to identify those initiatives that required further GA authority, and, hence, allocation by the Plenary, hopefully with minimal debate, to the Fifth Committee.

¶4. Wolff and Wiede agreed that any Fifth Committee consideration of the SYG's report, or portions thereof, would have to be time-bound. Once the Plenary decided to allocate items to the Fifth Committee, the GA President would have to specify a date by which Fifth Committee comments would be due, as was done with Fifth Committee consideration of A/60/568. Otherwise, Fifth Committee discussions would drag on, with no concrete decisions taken. Given the exclusive focus of the Fifth Committee during the resumed May session

on UN peacekeeping budget issues, any Fifth Committee consideration of the SYG's management report ideally would be concluded prior to commencement of the resumed May session. Wiede suggested that G-77 members probably would seek a far longer time to consider the SYG's report.

¶5. Wiede said that while GA President Eliasson was considering convening a GA Plenary session early in the week of March 20 to permit discussion of the procedural impasse over allocating the SYG's report, it might prove helpful to synchronize the scheduling of the next Plenary with ACABQ's issuance of its report. In any event, Wiede said he likely would convene a private meeting of 8 to 10 ambassadors, including from the U.S., on March 21 or 22 with a view to brokering consensus on a way forward.

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